

*Publicity
file*

12-11

December 6, 1974

*Fine Arts Critic
For National Catholic Reporter*

Mr. Harry James Cargas
Chairman, English Department
Webster College
470 Forest Lockwood
St. Louis, Missouri 63119

Dear Mr. Cargas:

Your letter of November 16th has been forwarded to this office.

Relative to your request for information on the exhibition "Archaeological Finds of the People's Republic of China," I am enclosing some material which I believe you will find helpful.

The exhibition will be housed at the Nelson Gallery April 20th through June 8th. Our coordinating office has just opened and we are in the process of finalizing the many areas that surround such an undertaking as this. Within a few weeks full promotional material will be available and your letter will be kept on file so that you can receive additional literature which might prove helpful.

Please feel free to contact us again, if we can be of further assistance. Also would you please furnish this office with the date and copy of your article, when it is to appear etc. We would very much appreciate your help in this matter.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Lois Stock
Project Secretary
Chinese Archaeological Treasurers (C.A.T.)

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Enclosures: News Release; Essay by Thomas Lawton

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J

(913) 296-3335

December 11, 1974

Miss Romalyn Tilghman
Executive Director
Association of Community Art Councils
of Kansas
117 West 10th Street
Topeka, Kansas 66212

Re: Press Release in
Ensemble - January

Dear Romalyn:

Thank you for your call this morning. I am enclosing the material we spoke of for your information.

Our coordinating office has just opened and we are in the process of finalizing all hours for viewing the exhibition Archaeological Finds of the People's Republic of China. The Exhibition will open at the Nelson Gallery Sunday, April 20th and run through Sunday, June 8th, a period of seven weeks.

I have included a copy of the form used in the office to accept phone reservations showing all information necessary to properly schedule any group. We also encourage people to write as well as phone. Perhaps you may wish to use this in your Newsletter.

The exhibition will be open seven days a week. Reservations will also be accepted for groups wishing to tour our permanent collections, and we encourage them to do so. Of particular interest in conjunction with this show is the Nelson Gallery's own superb collection of Chinese and Oriental art known throughout the world.

If I can be of further assistance please feel free to contact me. When corresponding would you someplace on your letter use the Code No. 12-11 for office reference purposes. Again, many thanks for your interest.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Lois Stock
Project Secretary
Chinese Archaeological Treasurers (C.A.T.)

Enclosures: Essay-Tom Lawton; News Release; Copy of office Scheduling form

copy of article requested

cc Marc Wilson ✓

Dec. Gallery Calendar Also sent

C
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Releases

December 18, 1974

Editor
Newsletter
American Committee for South Asian Art
Cedar Crest College
Allentown, Pennsylvania 18104

Dear Sir:

I am enclosing, for your information, material prepared for use in publications requesting data on The Exhibition of Archaeological Finds of the People's Republic of China which will be housed at the Nelson Gallery-Atkins Museum Sunday, April 20th through Sunday, June 8th, 1975.

I believe you will find this helpful if you wish to make note of this in your Newsletter. If we can be of further assistance in any way by supplying you with information relating to hotel accommodations, transportation, hours of viewing and so forth, please feel free to contact this office.

We are in the process of preparing full promotional packets and these should be ready in a few weeks.

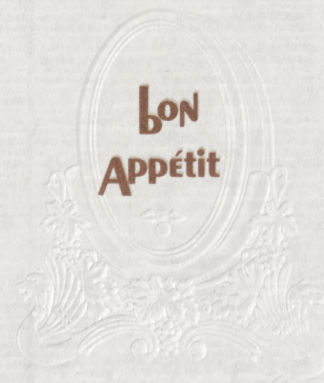
Sincerely.

Mrs. Lois Stock
Project Secretary
Chinese Archaeological Treasures (C.A.T.)

Enclosure: News Release; Essay-Thomas Lawton
cc: MW ✓

C
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P
Y

4700 BELLEVIEW • KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI 64112 • 816-753-2321



December 26, 1974

M. Frank Jones
Editor & Publisher

Mr. Mark Wilson,
Curator of Oriental Art,
Nelson Gallery-Atkins Museum,
4525 Oak Street,
Kansas City, Mo 64111

Dear Mr. Wilson:

In the course of some cover photography we did at the Gallery with Ross Taggart's assistance last fall, Ross was kind enough to suggest that we might want to tie in editorially with the forthcoming People's Republic of China exhibit next spring.

We have been looking forward to this opportunity with considerable excitement for months, and would now like to explore the possibilities with you, hopefully to coincide with our April-May, 1975 issue, which will be published approximately April 11.

Allow me to outline a few thoughts on our anticipated editorial treatment, with the hope that you can tell me what's possible (or impossible) and freely express your own views in this context:

1. Fundamentally, we want to utilize color photographs (transparencies if available) of several key pieces in the exhibit - the "Jade Suit"; "Flying Horse" and a few others - to background a major feature story on the traditional provincial cuisines of China, and the adaptation thereof to contemporary American tables. Naturally, we plan to include a number of recipes and food photos in support of the text.
2. It is my understanding that you have a strong personal interest in Chinese foods and cookery, in addition to your first-hand experience of the land, the people, their art and culture. If so, would you consider writing all or parts of our feature, correlating these aspects as they pertain to our enjoyment of Chinese cuisine today? If you have the time and inclination, we would be delighted to give our readers the expertise and authenticity your contribution would add. One or more of our senior editors would be available, in any event, to work with you as you see fit.

The Magazine of Good Taste

Norman Sun Temple U.

- 2 -

Mr. Mark Wilson
Curator of Oriental Art
Nelson Gallery-Atkins Museum

3. For the record, Bon Appetit's readership is now in excess of 1,000,000 per issue. We will share the pride of all Kansas Citians in having this exhibit - and we will also enjoy the added pleasure of telling the unrequited million souls about it.
4. There is always the matter of deadlines in our business. For April-May publication, we will need to have the feature essentially ready - i.e. photos and manuscript - no later than February 1.

Feb 1.

Would you be kind enough to call me as soon as possible after reading and considering the above thoughts? We would like to meet with you for an exchange of views the moment you are ready.

Cordially,

BON APPÉTIT MAGAZINE

M. Frank Jones

M. Frank Jones

mfj;pf

Historical background
Regional Cuisines
Provenance guide
Good - a - men a
drink.
Superb meal
Examples of courses
Practical side
pictures & historical
background

January 14, 1975

Mr. Mark Wilson
Curator of Oriental Art
Nelson Gallery-Atkins Museum
4525 Oak Street
Kansas City, Mo. 64111

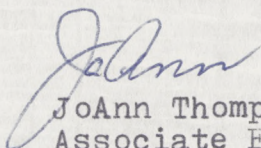
Dear Mark:

Thanks so much for giving us your time and thoughts for the Chinese food feature. We are counting on you for an introduction that will briefly explain the significance of the archeological exhibit and set the tone for what we hope will be a beautifully written and illustrated article.

I talked with Joan Stanley-Baker and she agreed to write the article. She feels strongly about the inter-relation of cooking with other arts in explaining national character and I'm sure she will do something very original and interesting.

We're looking forward to a first-hand experience with Chinese food and will welcome your thoughts and suggestions as we proceed with this challenge.

Cordially,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "JoAnn Thompson".

JoAnn Thompson
Associate Editor

February 10, 1975

Patricia M. Graves
Managing Editor
TRAVEL & LEISURE
61 West 51 Street
New York, N.Y. 10019

Dear Ms. Graves:

As you probably are aware, The Chinese Exhibition -- currently at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. -- will make its final Western World stop in Kansas City beginning in April. Naturally, this is a significant event for persons in the Midwest and Far West who have not had the occasion to see the collection either in Washington, Toronto, or one of the European capital cities where it has been shown.

We expect that the exhibition will attract visitors from many parts of North and Central America. For example, Mexicana Airlines plans to schedule special flights from Mexico to Kansas City. Naturally, the Chicago-Houston/Dallas-Denver triangle will be a primary interest-drawing area, and California cities (which had hoped to host the exhibition) also will have special travel plans.

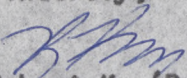
We think the fact that Kansas City was chosen as the only other American city to receive the exhibition (and that this is the last stop before the artifacts return to Peking) should be of interest to many of your readers.

I will be on special assignment from Carl Byoir's Southern regional office coordinating many aspects of the Kansas City visit. The director and curators of the Nelson Gallery of Art - Atkins Museum of Fine Arts look forward to assisting you with any story idea that you may have.

Please contact me at the gallery or Jim Palmer of Carl Byoir's Magazine-Book Department in New York.

Best regards.

Sincerely,


Robert K. (Rob) Martin
Encl.

bcc: Jim Palmer
Marc Wilson

bon
Appétit

4700 BELLEVIEW • KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI 64112 • 816-753-2321

February 25, 1975

Mr. Rob Martin
The Chinese Exhibition
Nelson Gallery=Atkins Museum
4500 Warwick
Kansas City, Missouri

Dear Rob:

I'm really sorry for all the hang-ups on TREND's photography assignment...I hope some good photos came out of it anyway and appreciate the cooperation from all of you.

Enclosed is a copy of the story. If you or Marc have any serious objections regarding content (forget the form) please call me at 362-4020. Unless we hear otherwise I'll inform TREND they can expect to proceed free of libel suits and other natural disasters.

Thanks very much.

JoAnn
JoAnn Thompson

*Talked to Ken Colleen
by phone, 3/7, provided
Marc Wilson's comments.
RKmm*

THE YIN AND YANG OF THE CHINESE EXHIBITION

Strange things are going on at the Nelson Gallery-Atkins Museum! Walls are closing in, ceilings are lower and doors aren't where they used to be. The main floor is beginning to resemble an intricate labyrinth, and week by week the number of viewable works of art keeps shrinking. Several large chambers are ~~forbodingly~~ ^{forbiddingly} dark and empty.

On a recent Sunday, the usual crowd of gallery goers appeared undismayed to find things not as they should be. Strangers to the gallery don't know what they're missing, and "regulars" seem to relish the feeling of walking around on a deserted stage before the curtain goes up.

That something is going on at the gallery must be obvious to anyone who crosses the threshold, whether voluntarily on in the clutches of an art lover not easily discouraged. The closed off rooms on the main floor, however, are only the tip of an iceberg. What you don't see is still below the surface---but just barely. A well-tuned antenna is certain to pick up a wave of anticipation mixed with equal parts tension and pride.

It starts at the entry where even "Check your umbrella" has an Old West ring of authority. Heels clicking on the polished floor bring a guard to inspect you with more

curiosity than in days past. Suddenly guards who used to doze standing up, are wide-awake vigilantes. ✓

Rumor and speculation are the natural traveling companions of a Momentous Event, and The Nelson Gallery-Atkins Museum is preparing to host the most momentous event since its opening--- The Exhibition of Archeological Finds of The People's Republic of China, ^{opening} April 20, through June 8.

For some months now rumors concerning the exhibit have been circulating in an ever-widening circle. They center around the "why" and "how" of an artistic coup that has museum directors from coast to coast eating their hearts out. Even the most prime-time minded of civic boosters has to admit Kansas City is in good company with other cities selected for the exhibition: London, Paris, Vienna, Stockholm, Toronto and Washington, D.C. -- all world capitals with one fairly obvious exception. ✓

Why Kansas City? The most prevalent rumor states emphatically that "Chairman Mao chose Kansas City because of its location in an agricultural community." In this case there is at least a grain of truth in the field of rumors.

One far-fetched story had Chairman Mao, Henry Kissinger and Laurence Sickman^{gallery director,} negotiating behind locked doors for the highly coveted honor. Certainly it was a high level decision, but not necessarily that exclusive.

At the other end of the rumor scale, Sickman was reputed to have declined the exhibit, pleading inability to handle such a gigantic undertaking, but ^{persuaded} finally was forced to succumb to ~~pressure from high places.~~

^cDecline the Chinese Exhibition? Not likely! To separate fact from fiction we talked to Marc Wilson, curator of Oriental Art at the Nelson Gallery. "Why Kansas City?" Shunning false modesty he replied, "Staff expertise...also physical space, available security, geographical location, and the high esteem the Chinese have for Laurence Sickman, ~~gallery director.~~"

In Sickman and Wilson, the Nelson Gallery has two Chinese art ^pexperts who speak the language, understand the culture and know the background and significance of the items to be displayed. Since the Nelson Gallery can boast a permanent Chinese collection that is world-renowned, staff expertise in this field is not entirely "Occidental."

✓
to accept it
after talking
with people
in high
places!

Wilson further explained that when the exhibit opened in Paris as a goodwill gesture of The People's Republic, American museums threw their hats in the competitive ring on the chance that the show might come to the United States. But to which city? Washington, D.C., of course, as a matter of diplomacy. And after that? A recommendation was made by representatives of the White House, the State Department, and the National Endowment for the Humanities. Presumably The Chinese Committee for the Organization of Exhibitions of Archeological Finds made the selection. "And the Winner is..." Kansas City, Missouri---out^sside the ranks of glittering world capitals, in the heart of an agrarian community more closely related to The People's Republic own agrarian culture.

Having been selected for this great honor, the Nelson Gallery personnel had little time to bask in the glory. Along with the distinction of hosting the Exhibition go myriad problems of mounting the displays, lighting, security, publicity, public information, brochures, catalogs, the preview showing; even mundane problems such as parking, public transportation and a near donnybrook over trimming shrubbery on the grounds! The man standing squarely in the eye of this hurricane is Marc Wilson.

At ³³~~30~~ Wilson is very young to be curator of such an important

5.
and prestigious collection. He came to the Nelson Gallery in 1971 as associate curator and became curator in 1973. Prior to coming to Kansas City he served as translator and project consultant at the ^{National} Royal Palace Museum in Taipei, Taiwan. The challenge offered by the forthcoming exhibition does not dismay him in the least. "Unflappable" is the word for Wilson, who carries an enormous amount of information in his head and doles or pours it out as called for. He is the man with the answers, and there are plenty of questions.

Outside Marc Wilson's office, the wall is papered with floor plans, charts and diagrams showing every square inch of the gallery's main floor, with precision planning of space allocations and traffic flow. A drafting board overflows with designs for display cases that are ever-improving adaptations of those used in other cities on the current "road" tour.

The Kansas City showcasing of The Chinese Exhibition, ~~Wilson is confident, will be the most polished performance yet.~~ ^{Wilson is confident, will be the most polished performance yet.} It helps to try a show out in Paris and London!

Specially designed cases will be set into newly constructed wall facades that cover the existing walls in many of the chambers on the main floor. Ceilings in some rooms have been lowered,

Wilson's museum tour

both for dramatic effect and added security. Two miniature gilded bronze leopards, inlaid with silver spots and gemstone eyes, are popular favorites in the exhibit. They will reside in a spotlighted case, covered by plexiglass and containing silica gel crystals to absorb moisture in the air as a humidity control. Multiply such careful measures by 385 exhibits and you begin to get some idea of the massive detail and work that goes into mounting the exhibit! In the entire exhibition there are only three freestanding cases, and those are so designed and weighted they are in no danger of being moved or overturned. All other cases are recessed into the wall. Five members of a Chinese delegation will check the exhibition morning and night to be certain all is in order.

Personally guided tours are not offered, primarily to forestall the "jamming up" of groups in any one spot. The gallery has purchased self-contained audio-electronic units which are available for a small rental fee. This ingenious guide moves at your pace. "Click" and you have a recorded message explaining the object on view. To facilitate crowds, ^{expected} ~~estimated~~ to number about 200,000 during the course of the show, there is a single entrance and single exit with one-way traffic following the carefully charted course. New doors and walls make it possible

to achieve this sort of traffic pattern on a floor that normally lends itself to random rambling.

Is there any chance the expected crowds won't materialize, here in what one New York writer chose to refer to as "Peking on the Kaw?" The possibility of a disappointing turnout is slim. This is, after all, only the third showing on the North American continent and, more importantly, the last chance to view the exhibition before it returns to Peking---the real one. Several hotels are already reporting substantial reservations during the period of the exhibition.

Local society is gearing up for a field day and scholars may think they have entered Paradise. For Kansas Citians generally, it is an opportunity to observe 600,000 years of human progress through unearthed treasures of an ancient civilization. The avowed purpose of the exhibition is "discovering the meaning of the past as a guide to the present." Confucius had a saying to suit every occasion, and perhaps this one is most appropriate: "By nature, men are nearly alike; by practice, they get to be wide apart."



MEMO TO: Rob Martin
cc: John Budd
FROM: Jim Palmer
SUBJECT:

Feb. 28, 1975

Rob --

I just did a followup on our airline magazine stories, and thanks to your quick work we're in both of the target magazines for May:

UNITED MAINLINER -- We'll have a photo spread in color with some short copy detailing the facts of the show.

CONTINENTAL FLIGHTIME -- We'll have a short summary of the show and, hopefully, one black and white photo in Between Flights, the column written by Angie Vogl.

Jim
...JP...

/mp

~~FILE~~

March 4, 1975

C Ms. JoAnn Thompson
Associate Editor
bon Appetit
4700 Belleview
Kansas City, Mo. 64112

O Dear JoAnn:

P We very much appreciate the opportunity of reviewing your proposed copy for the TREND article concerning The Chinese Exhibition. Trying to avoid the time-worn tendency to play editor or censor, I have but a few suggested changes -- some of which I've indicated on the actual copy, some of which follow as recommendations. Naturally, these are on a take 'em-or-leave 'em basis.

P Page 1, Final Paragraph. The heels clicking sounds totalitarian; Could you tone it down a bit?

Y Page 2, First Paragraph. Our guard force will kill you for this one, but I don't want to interfere with journalistic freedom.

Y Page 2, About world cities. This data about world capital cities has been bantered in all the media, but to be technically, correct, Toronto is not the capital of Canada. Ottawa is. You can roll with that one as your wish.

Page 3, About Laurence Sickman. You know more about it, apparently, than I. I trust you've talked with this gentleman.

Page 6, About free-standing cases. I don't know your source of information, but three is incorrect. Actually, there are 40

Page 7, Last sentence. Again, this is a question of editorial freedom, but we're staying away from anything Confucian. It's a sensitivity with the Chinese. Use your own judgement.

Talk with you soon.

Sincerely,

Robert K. (Rob) Martin
Project Director

cc: L. Sickman
M. Wilson ✓

publicity

MEMORANDUM

March 5, 1975

To: L. Sickman/M. Wilson
From: R. Martin
Subject: King Features Article

This is a draft of the final copy which was submitted by Carl Byoir's New York Office to King Syndicate. The syndicate serves newspapers throughout the country and has a regular readership of approximately 7-million.

A photograph of Marc, with an art object, is also being submitted.

The syndicate has acknowledged that the story likely will run in newspapers in April.

. SO YOU WANT TO BECOME A COLLECTOR?

Lured by artistic appreciation as well as the prospect of profits, many an American sooner or later succumbs to the bite of the "collecting bug."

Once bitten, the amateur collector quickly finds that (1) the famous pieces are beyond his financial reach, and (2) the more modest levels of the art-buying world are a maze of uncertainty. So how does he start?

Marc F. Wilson, curator of oriental art at the Nelson Gallery of Art-Atkins Museum of Fine Arts in Kansas City, Mo., cautions against letting money you set aside to buy art burn a hole in your pocket.

Running out and buying the first art object you like is usually a mistake, Wilson advises. Take your time. Make frequent visits to the local museum to study painting, sculpture, and other art objects that interest you. Ask for advice from the museum staff. Many galleries and museums, including the Nelson Gallery, set hours aside every week when staff personnel talk individually with visitors about art and collecting. (But don't ask for cost evaluations. It's against the law in many areas, and it's an ethical problem for art experts.)

Then, find a reputable art dealer. A good dealer is willing to wait a while before he makes a sale, and meantime the novice can learn much about what to look for and how to buy wisely. Wise dealers know that contributing to the "education" of customers eventually pays off. It can make for a mutually beneficial relationship.

Wilson's own time for counseling would-be collectors has been dramatically reduced in recent weeks, as he is the focal point at the Nelson Gallery-Atkins Museum for the mounting of the famous "Chinese Exhibition" scheduled to open on April 20. It is one of the largest art exhibits ever to visit the U.S. and it is the most complex one with which the Nelson-Atkins staff has ever worked.

(more)

"Collections such as 'The Exhibition of Archaeological Finds of the People's Republic of China'," Wilson points out, "have spurred popular interest in collecting. Everyone says to himself, openly or secretly, 'I wish I could have an object like that.' It's an inspiration seeking satisfaction."

While the average person can't afford famous originals, Wilson contends there are good values in original works at affordable prices.

To find them, he encourages new collectors to compare what they want with the very best of its kind.

"When I'm shopping for myself or the gallery," the young curator notes, "I keep in the front of my mind a picture of the finest object of its kind I've ever seen. This helps me judge the quality of the piece I'm actually looking at."

People ask Wilson what particular type of object to start with, and he responds it doesn't really matter, "so long as you're basically interested in it for its design and beauty." He is strongly opposed, however, to "fad buying."

"Chinese ceramics and contemporary paintings are now fashionable," Wilson remarks, "but the prices are vastly inflated. Be on guard."

"Stay off the art-buying bandwagon. Never buy just because everybody else has one! Popularity in art results in over-pricing. Be objective. Try to be detached from your ego which presses you to buy quickly and rashly. Avoid the cliquish things, and learn all you can about what makes are desirable," he recommends. Wilson suggests that new collectors and experienced ones alike search out "desirable art objects that are not in vogue."

The best art buys today? Wilson's list includes late-19th century and 20th century Japanese prints, small European art objects (such as finely carved boxes and ivory pieces), Irish silver, Irish furniture, selected African objects (including masks), ancient Greek pots, vases, and bowls, and Chinese calligraphy (painted lettering).

(more)

How Much to Spend?

What should one spend in these areas? \$100 to \$1,000.

Other Wilsonian tips for collectors: Start narrow. Don't try to amass a big collection quickly. Be discriminating. Don't buy for the name.

"Jade collectors, for example, seem to want one of everything -- a carved horse, a little frog, a reclining camel . . . it goes on and on. Buy for quality, not for quantity," he urges.

What about reproductions versus antiques?

An honest reproduction, Wilson explains, is as exact a match of the real object as an artist can make. There are some very good reproductions to buy, he believes. Look for those that are copied as much like the original as possible.

The 33-year-old authority -- whose bachelor's and master's degrees are from Yale and whose professional experience geographically spans Ohio and Taiwan -- uses the case of the famous "Flying Celestial Horse of Kansu" as a good illustration of bad reproduction. The original horse, measuring 17 3/4 inches long by 13 9/16 inches high, is probably the best-known bronze figure in the Chinese Exhibition. From the Eastern Han dynasty, dating to the 2nd Century B.C., it was excavated in 1969 in western China's Kansu Province.

Inferior Replicas Sold

"Reproductions of the 'Celestial Horse' were made for sale at one or more of the cities where the exhibition has visited," Wilson explains. "Unfortunately, the replica is of inferior design. It's only two-thirds to three-quarters the actual size. The surface texture is wrong. The body is out of proportion -- too short. The rump is too round, too smooth. The whole figure lacks the taut, energetic spirit of the original. It looks like an overstuffed sausage in the shape of a horse."

(more)

Although Wilson didn't say it, the horse reproductions -- made of a plaster substance -- were priced at about \$500 each, and reportedly 100 of them were sold out the first morning at one museum. No reproductions of artifacts in the Chinese Exhibition will be sold at the Nelson Gallery-Atkins Museum.

Beware of Jade and Ivory

As for Chinese and other imported art objects now available through many American department and specialty stores, Wilson's remarks relating to the quality of original works and reproductions all apply. Be especially wary, he says, of objects described as jade or ivory. Many are phonies. Even "certificates of authenticity" may be contrived (and in court they're barely worth the paper they're written on.) So buy from reputable stores and galleries. Know that the dealer will stand behind what he sells.

In discussing antiques, Wilson notes that the legal definition is "any object more than 100 years old."

"The term 'antique' has produced a widespread misconception that if something's old it's valuable. This isn't necessarily so. For example, Roman lamps found buried in North Africa after thousands of years are practically worthless today. Why? Because the design is bad, they are visually uninteresting, and so many were buried. Consequently, there simply is no demand for them, despite their undoubted antiquity.

"Age is not the determining factor of art value. Regardless of when it was made, design and desirability make an art object worth having," the art historian stresses.

He adds that in the total scheme of history 100 years is a very short span of time. Though legally something that passes the century mark becomes an antique, "only foolish people buy for that reason alone," Wilson admonishes.

(more)

Should one ever buy art as an investment?

Laurence Sickman, director of the Nelson Gallery-Atkins Museum (and Wilson's boss) warns against amateurs' speculating in the art field.

Speculative Buying Risky

"Certainly it's gratifying to buy something and have its value go up," Sickman relates, "but buying for pure speculation is a risky thing. Doing it successfully takes a deep knowledge of art and a thorough understanding of the market and its trends."

"Moreover, the work of art must be of the highest quality of its kind for it to increase in value appreciably."

Echoing Sickman's sentiments, Wilson points to "first-rate Picassos versus second-rate Picassos. One ought to appreciate in value quicker than the other, but not even the experts know what the relative rates will be. So it is with all art."

In unison, Sickman and Wilson stress: "Buy it because you like it; buy it because it's good."

Collecting art is a matter of experience, they conclude. Looking is as important as reading. Understanding of art comes to many with time, interest and constant awareness. Even so, mistakes may be made.

But don't be dismayed. Keep an open mind. Art is a qualitative subject and a personal thing. Who knows? Even though the painting or sculpture or funny little carved box you bought may never be worth a fortune, you'll know it's still a fine work of art discovered by your developing taste and careful study.

In the vast complexity of the art world, that's a knowledge of real importance and a source of lasting personal satisfaction.

The Chinese Exhibition

The Exhibition of Archaeological Finds of the People's Republic of China

The William Rockhill Nelson Gallery-Atkins Museum of Fine Arts

April 20th to June 8th, 1975

中華人民共和國出土文物展覽

Flying Celestial Horse

(Exhibition No. 218)

Height: 34.5 c.m. (13 9/16 in.)

Length: 45 c.m. (17 3/4 in.)

Unearthed in 1969 at Wu-wei, Kansu

2nd Century A.D.

This bronze celestial horse flying on the back of a swallow was excavated from a Han Dynasty tomb in 1969, in western China's Kansu Province. It was part of a large hoard of objects made for burial with a powerful general. The cache included 39 bronze horses, carriages, attendants, drivers and an image of the general. It was commonly believed in ancient Han China that special horses, called "Celestial Horses" had the power to transform themselves into dragons and to act as a medium through which the dead passed on to the after world. This horse is a rare embodiment of that belief. To show the speed of the flying horse the unknown craftsman placed its right hoof on the back of a swallow in flight. The swallow looks back in amazement.

FOR: King Features Syndicate

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Once bitten, the amateur collector quickly finds the famous pieces are beyond his financial reach, and the rest of the art-buying world is a maze of uncertainty. So how does he start?

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(more)

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"When I'm shopping for myself or the gallery," the young curator notes, "I keep in the front of my mind a picture of the finest object of its kind I've ever seen. This helps me judge the quality of the piece I'm actually looking at."

People ask Wilson what particular type of object to start with, and he responds it doesn't really matter, "so long as you're basically interested in it for its design and beauty." He is strongly opposed, however, to "fad buying."

(more)

"Chinese ceramics and contemporary paintings are now fashionable," Wilson remarks, "but the prices are ghastly inflated. Be on guard.

"Stay off the art-buying bandwagon. Never buy just because everybody else has one! Popularity in art results in overpricing. Be objective. Try to be detached from your ego which presses you to buy quickly and rashly. Avoid the cliquish things, and learn all you can about what makes art desirable," he recommends. Wilson suggests that new collectors and experienced ones alike search out "desirable art objects which are not in vogue."

The best art buys today? Wilson's list includes old master paintings, late-19th century and 20th century Japanese prints, small European art objects (such as finely-carved boxes and ivory pieces), Irish silver, Irish furniture, selected African objects (including masks), ancient Greek pots, vases, and bowls, and Chinese calligraphy (painted lettering).

What should one spend in these areas? \$100 to \$1,000.

Other Wilsonian collectors' tips: Start narrow. Don't try to amass a big collection quickly. Be discriminating. Don't buy for the name.

"Jade collectors seem to want one of everything -- a carved horse, a little frog, a reclining camel.....it goes on and on. Buy for quality, not for quantity," he urges.

(more)

What about reproductions and antiques?

An honest reproduction, Wilson explains, is as exact a replica of the real object that an artist can make. There are some very good reproductions to buy, he believes. Look for those which are copied as much like the original as possible.

The 33-year-old authority -- whose bachelor's and master's degrees are from Yale and whose professional experience geographically spans Ohio and Taiwan -- uses the case of the famous "Flying Celestial Horse of Kansu" as a good illustration of bad reproduction. The real horse, measuring 17 3/4 inches long by 13 9/16 inches high, is probably the best-known bronze figure in the Chinese Exhibition. From the Eastern Han Dynasty dating to the 2nd Century B.C., it was excavated in 1969 in western China's Kansu Province.

"Reproductions of the 'Celestial Horse' were made for sale at one or more of the cities where the exhibition has visited," Wilson explains. "Unfortunately, the replica is of inferior design. It's only two-thirds to three-quarters the actual size. The surface texture is wrong. The body proportionately is too short. The rump is too round, too smooth. The whole figure lacks the taut, energetic spirit of the original. It looks like an over-stuffed sausage in the shape of a horse."

(more)

Without Wilson's saying it himself, the horse reproductions -- made of a plaster substance -- were priced at about \$500 each, and reportedly, 100 of them were sold out the first morning at one museum. No reproductions of artifacts in the Chinese Exhibition will be sold at the Nelson Gallery-Atkins Museum.

As for Chinese and other imported art objects now available through many American department and specialty stores, Wilson's remarks relating to the quality of original works and reproductions all apply. Be especially wary, he says, of objects described as jade or ivory. Many are phonies. Even "certificates of authenticity" may be contrived (and they're barely worth the paper they're written on in court).

Buy from good stores and galleries. Know that the dealer will stand behind what he sells.

In discussing antiques, Wilson notes that the legal definition is "any object more than 100 years old."

"The term 'antique,' has produced a widespread misconception -- if something's old, it's valuable. This isn't necessarily so. For example, Roman lamps, found buried in North Africa after thousands of years, are practically worthless today. Why? Because the design is bad, and they are visually uninteresting, because so many were buried, and because there is no demand for them.

(more)

"Age is not the determining factor of art value. Regardless of when it is made, design and desirability make an art object worth having," the art historian stresses.

He adds that in the total scheme of history, 100 years is a very short span of time. Though legally something that passes the century mark becomes an antique, "only foolish people buy for that reason alone," Wilson admonishes.

Should one ever buy art as an investment?

Laurence Sickman, director of the Nelson Gallery-Atkins Museum (and Wilson's boss) warns against amateurs' speculating in the art field.

"Certainly, it's gratifying to buy something and have its value go up," Sickman relates, "but buying for pure speculation is a risky thing. Doing it successfully takes a deep knowledge of art and a thorough understanding of the market and its trends.

"Moreover, the work of art must be of the highest quality of its kind for it to increase in value appreciably."

Echoing Sickman's sentiments, Wilson points to "first-rate Picassos versus second-rate Picassos. One ought to appreciate in value quicker than the other, but not even the experts know what the relative rates will be. So it is with all art."

(more)

COLLECTING/ -7-

In unison, Sickman and Wilson stress: "Buy it because you like it. Buy it because it's good."

Collecting art is a matter of experience, they conclude. Looking is as important as reading. Understanding of art comes to many with time, interest, and constant awareness. Mistakes may be made.

But don't dismay. Keep an open mind. Art is a qualitative subject and a personal thing. Who knows? Even though the painting or sculpture or funny little carved box you bought may never be worth a fortune, you'll know it's still a fine work of art discovered by your developing taste and careful study.

In the vast complexity of the art world, that's a knowledge of real importance and a quality of lasting personal satisfaction.

##

*Includes Wilson's
Changes 2/24.
+ Sickmark 2/25*

FOR: King Features Syndicate

SO YOU WANT TO BECOME A COLLECTOR?

Lured by famous art collections, many an American sooner or later succumbs to the bite of the "collecting bug."

Once bitten, the amateur collector quickly finds the famous pieces are beyond his financial reach, and the rest of the art-buying world is a maze of uncertainty. So how does he start?

Marc F. Wilson, curator of oriental art at the Nelson Gallery of Art-Atkins Museum of Fine Arts in Kansas City, Mo., cautions against letting ~~art buying money burn a hole in your~~ money you set aside to buy art burn a hole in your pocket.

Running out and buying the first art object you like is usually a mistake, Wilson advises. Take your time. Make frequent visits to the local museum to study painting, sculpture, and other art objects that interest you. Ask for advice from the museum staff. Many galleries and museums, including the Nelson Gallery, set hours aside every week to talk individually with visitors about art and collecting. (But don't ask for cost evaluations. It's against the law in many areas, and it's an ethical problem for art experts.)

Then, find a reputable art dealer. Though the dealer may have to wait awhile to make a sale, the novice can learn much about what to look for and how to buy wisely. And good dealers know that interested customers eventually pay off. It can make for a mutually-beneficial relationship.

(more)

Wilson's own time for counseling would-be collectors has been dramatically reduced in recent weeks, as he is the focal point at the Nelson Gallery-Atkins Museum for the mounting of the famous "Chinese Exhibition" scheduled to open on April 20. It is one of the largest art exhibits ever to visit the U. S. and it is the most complex with which the Nelson-Atkins staff has ever worked.

"Collections, such as 'The Exhibition of Archaeological Finds of the People's Republic of China,'" Wilson points out, "have spurred popular interest in collecting.

"Everyone says to himself, openly or secretly, 'I wish I could have an object like that.' It's an inspiration seeking satisfaction."

While the average person can't afford the famous originals, Wilson contends there are good values in original works at affordable prices.

To find them, he encourages new collectors to compare what they want with the very best of its kind.

"When I'm shopping for myself or the gallery," the young curator notes, "I keep in the front of my mind a picture of the finest object of its kind I've ever seen. This helps me judge the quality of the piece I'm actually looking at."

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(more)

Insert
Be objective. Try to be detached your ego which presses you to buy quickly and rashly.

COLLECTING/ -3-

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The best art buys today? Wilson's list includes old master paintings, late-19th century and 20th century Japanese prints, small European art objects (such as finely-carved boxes and ivory pieces), Irish silver, Irish furniture, selected African objects (including masks), ancient Greek pots, vases, and bowls, and Chinese calligraphy (painted lettering).

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(more)

COLLECTING/ -5-

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Should one ever buy art as an investment?

Laurence Sickman, director of the Nelson Gallery-Atkins Museum (and Wilson's boss) ~~declares "investing in art."~~

"It's got to be the riskiest business in the world," Sickman declares. "Every year, we read about a famous museum purchasing a fabulous work of art at an horrendous price. The next year, the work turns out to be a fake. If the world's art experts can be wrong, where does that leave the little guy -- the individual amateur collector?"

~~amateurs' speculating in the art field.~~
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"Certainly, it's gratifying to buy something and have its value go up," Sickman relates, "but buying for pure ^(more) speculation is a risky thing. Doing it successfully takes a deep knowledge of art and a thorough understanding of the market and its trends.

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##

March 5, 1975
Luncheon Meeting
Woodside Racquet Club

Publicity names

Ellyn Abloff
Plaza Association

Ray Bennison
Convention & Visitors Bureau

Bob Bernstein
Bernstein-Rein & Boasberg

Pete Brake
KMBA-TV

Lee Derrough
Worlds of Fun

Kathy Donnelly
J.C. Nichols

Jack Felton
Interstate Brands Corporation

Carl Flickinger
WDAF-TV

John Gilbert
Chamber of Commerce

Bill Grigsby
Kansas City Scouts

Bob Gringrich
Crown Center Redevelopment

Sam Hales
Chamber of Commerce

Hal Heavener
Waddell & Reed

Greg Helm
Ad II

Sue Lambeth
Plaza Association

Walt Lockman
KMBZ-KMBR

Craig Lowder
Worlds of Fun

Larry Lubenow
Carl Byoir & Associates

Marilyn Maloney
River Quay Merchants Association

Rob Martin
Nelson Gallery

Marshall Miller
Swanson-Midgley-Eager-Gangwere

Bob Moore
Westport Square Venture

Gerry Noonan
KCMO-TV

Art Parks
KMBC-TV

Tom Reno
City Information Office

Fred Rivers
Merchants Association

Steve Rose
Scout-Sun

Bruce Sloan
Kansas City Kings

Nancy Stutzman
J. C. Nichols Co.

Howard W. Turtle
Kansas City Star

Bob Wardlow
Kansas City Advertising Federation

Marc Wilson
Nelson Gallery

Rob Wood
Kansas City Magazine

MAY 4 1975

MAY 11 1975

TV 19

WHERE THE AUCTION IS



*Called to ask
wording 3/19
JS*

*Red signed
forms 4/3/75
w/ tickets*

2205 Northeast 39th Street
Kansas City, Mo. 64116
March 11, 1975

Mr. Marc F. Wilson, Curator or Oriental Art
William Rockhill Nelson Gallery of Art
45th and Oak
Kansas City, Mo. 64110

Dear Mr. Wilson:

My responsibility with the TV 19 Auction, scheduled for April 14
through April 19, is publicity. We are excited about the Gallery's
donation to the Auction of two packages, each for two persons, to
visit the Chinese Exhibition privately, accompanied by you.

I shall appreciate your letting me know if the following wording
is not acceptable regarding that donation. We wish to include such a
timely contribution in our news releases, and I shall feel more secure
about doing so knowing that you have read this.

Two packages, each for two persons, to see the Chinese
Exhibition privately, accompanied by Marc F. Wilson, curator
of Chinese art at the Nelson Gallery. The private visit will
be scheduled for a Sunday morning when the Gallery is closed
to the general public. (We may not use the word tour in regard
to these private visits - a stipulation in the arrangements made
to bring the exhibition here.)

Thank you for looking this over. Please do call me if you prefer
different wording.

We should also like to use in our publicity another donation I
understand the Gallery is making: two tickets for an Opening Party
prior to the public opening of the Exhibition. It will be a much
sought after item! I prefer not use it, however, until I have details
and a chance to check wording with you.

Sincerely,

Dona Sue Cool

Dona Sue Cool (Mrs. Glenn M.)
Auction Publicity

Home: 453-5312

Kansas City Public Television
4220 Johnson Drive • Shawnee Mission, Ks. 66205
(913) 722-5225

*Yes
Sun. 10am 5/4
Sat. 10am 5/11*

*4/19 - Sat
8pm*

TV19

WHERE THE AUCTION IS



March 21, 1975

Mr. Mark Wilson
Curator Of Oriental Art
NELSON-ATKINS ART GALLERY
45th & Oak
Kansas City, Missouri

Dear Mr. Wilson:

Thank you for your donations to the TV-19 Auction.

Enclosed you will find the necessary donor forms and a pre-addressed envelope. Please sign both forms and fill in the information wherever there is a "X." Return all copies and we will then send your copy to you.

When I spoke with you, you were unsure of the exact date for the two visits with you to the Chinese Archaeological Exhibit. The tentative dates were April 27, May 11, May 25 or June 1. Please specify on the forms the date you have decided upon.

Thank you again for your contributions.

Sincere regards,

Barbara Shriber
jhh

Barbara Shriber
Chairman Of Special Items

Enc.
BS/jhh

Kansas City Public Television
4220 Johnson Drive • Shawnee Mission, Ks. 66205
(913) 722-5225



Southwestern Bell

500 East Eighth Street
Kansas City, Missouri 64106
Phone (816) 275-8571

Donald C. Lottmann
Area Public Relations Supervisor

March 31, 1975

Mr. Mark Wilson
Nelson Gallery - Atkins Museum
4525 Oak Street
Kansas City, Missouri 64111

Dear Mark:

In addition to returning your negative and slides, I've also included several copies of our bill insert promoting The Chinese Exhibition.

We begin mailing the insert this week to more than 1,300,000 Missourians.

Please accept my thanks for your assistance as well as best wishes for maintaining your sanity in what obviously will be a very exciting and hectic period.

Hope the turnstiles spin at a record-setting rate.

Sincerely,

Enclosures